



CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS: Caring For Our Children – Best Practice Standards



Best Practice Standards

INFANT FEEDING

- Encourage/support breastfeeding by onsite arrangements for moms to breastfeed
- Serve milk or formula to at least 12 months
- Feed infants on cue
- Do not feed infants beyond satiety/allow infants to stop the feeding
- Hold infants while bottle feeding
- Develop plan for introducing age appropriate solid foods in consultation with parent
- Introduce age appropriate foods no sooner than 4 months, preferably at 6 months
- Introduce breastfed infants gradually to iron fortified foods no sooner than 4 months, preferably 6 months
- Do not feed an infant formula mixed with cereal, juice, or other foods
- Serve whole fruits, mashed or pureed, for infants 7 months up to one year
- Serve no fruit juice to children younger than 12 months

NUTRITION

- Limit oils by choosing monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and avoiding trans fats, saturated fats, and fried foods
- Serve meats and/or beans avoiding fried meats
- Serve other milk equivalent products (yogurt, cottage cheese) using low-fat variants for children two years and older
- Serve whole milk to 12 - 24 month olds who are not on human milk, or serve reduced-fat milk to those at risk for hypercholesterolemia or obesity
- Serve fat-free (skim) or 1% milk to 2 years or older
- Serve whole grains breads, cereals, and pastas
- Serve vegetables (dark green, orange, deep yellow and root, such as potatoes and vianda)
- Serve fruits of several varieties, especially whole
- Only 100% juice, no added sweeteners
- Offer juice (100%) only during meals
- No more than 4-6 oz juice/day for 1-6 year olds
- No more than 8-12 oz juice/day for 7-12 year olds
- Water available outside and inside
- Teach children appropriate portion size by using plates, bowls, and cups that are developmentally appropriate to nutritional needs
- Adults eating meals with children eat items that meet standards
- Serve small sized, age appropriate portions
- Permit children to have one or more additional servings of nutritious foods that are low in sugar, fat, and sodium as needed to meet caloric needs of the child and teach children who require limited portions about portion size and monitor their portions
- Limit salt by avoiding salty foods (chips, pretzels)
- Avoid sugar, including concentrated sweets (candy, sodas, sweetened drinks, fruit nectars, flavored milk)
- Do not force or bribe children to eat
- Do not use food as reward or punishment

Best Practice Standards (CONTINUED)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Provide adequate space, both inside and outside play
- Provide orientation and annual training opportunities for caregivers/teachers to learn age-appropriate gross motor activities and games that promote physical activity
- Develop written policies on the promotion of physical activity and the removal of potential barriers to physical activity participation
- Require caregivers/teachers to promote children's active play and participate in children's active games at time when they can safely do so
- Do not withhold active play from children who misbehave
- Do not utilize media (TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer with children younger than 2 years
- Limit total media time to 2 year olds and older to no more than 30 min/week
- Limit media time only for education purposes or physical activity
- Do not utilize TV, video, or DVD viewing during meal or snack time
- For birth to 6 years, provide 2-3 occasions daily active play outdoors, weather permitting
- For toddlers, 60-90 minutes/8-hour day for moderate to vigorous physical activity
- For preschoolers, 90-120 minutes/8-hour day for moderate to vigorous physical activity
- For children birth to 6 years, 2 or more structured or adult-led activities or games that promote movement daily
- Daily supervised tummy time for infants
- Use infant equipment (swings, stationary centers, seats, bouncers) only for short periods of time, if at all

American Academy Of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. 2011. *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs. 3rd edition.* Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association. Also available at <http://nrckids.org>.

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